



Devin Scillian

The Children of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
c/o Jean B. Bellavance,
148 S. Bethlehem Pike
Ambler, PA 19002-5822

Dear friends,

What a thrill! I can't begin to tell you how honored I am that you selected my book *Memoirs of a Goldfish* for the Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award. I was so excited when I received the good news that I read the letter...TWICE!

No doubt, any time you hear that children somewhere are enjoying your book, it's a wonderful feeling. But I have to admit to a little extra delight in finding that my little fish has been a hit in Pennsylvania. My father was in the U.S. Army when I was a child which means we moved around quite a bit. It also means that we got to spend three wonderful years in Chambersburg, PA. I have a million terrific memories of my time in the Keystone State, everything from Gibbles potato chips to trips to Hershey Park. (I can't eat a Hershey bar without being whisked back in time to my days at Grandview Elementary and Chambersburg Area Middle School.) I think back to the books that I read in those schools and how important they were to me -- it's a little overwhelming to find that my book is now in those same libraries and classrooms.

I should tell you that my family had a big part in the creation of my book. One day my daughter Christian came home and said, "Dad, I have an idea for a book called *Memoirs of a Goldfish*." WOW! I couldn't believe what a great title that was! And it got my whole family thinking about our experiences with pet fish, and what their lives must be like. That dinner conversation lit a fire in my imagination and in no time at all, my little fish was swimming across the page. I also need to mention my partner in the book, the illustrator, Tim Bowers. Tim's pictures are just absolutely perfect to me, and I know he's as thrilled as I am that you chose our book.

I sure hope to make it to Pennsylvania for the award celebration next year. It would be so good to be back! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Your pal,

Devin Scillian